



Media Information

Fanatec GT World Challenge Europe

4<sup>th</sup> April 2022

### **ROWE Racing gains valuable experience at Imola season opener – Victory in the Esports GT Pro Series.**

- The two ROWE Racing BMW M4 GT3s finish in P11 and P15 at the three-hour Imola race.
- Andreas Roos: "We have a very good basis, but we need to optimise it in quite a few areas."
- Neil Verhagen wins the Fanatec Esports GT Pro Series sim race in the virtual BMW M4 GT3 on Saturday evening.

**Munich.** At the season opener of the Fanatec GT World Challenge Europe at Imola (ITA), the two ROWE Racing BMW M4 GT3s had good pace but were unable to convert it into top rankings in a difficult race. In car #98, Nick Catsburg (NED), Augusto Farfus (BRA) and Nick Yelloly (GBR) crossed the finish line in eleventh place. The BMW Junior Team with Dan Harper (GBR), Max Hesse (GER) and Neil Verhagen (USA) finished its maiden race in the race series with a top-class field in 15<sup>th</sup> place. On Saturday evening, Verhagen celebrated victory in the virtual BMW M4 GT3 in the opening race of the Fanatec Esports GT Pro Series, and brought home five points for the team standings.

At the legendary Imola track, the BMW M4 GT3 regularly hinted at its great potential, but was unable to make use of it when it came to the crunch at the weekend. Qualifying was interrupted with yellow and red flags numerous times, and the two BMW M4 GT3s started from twelfth and 18<sup>th</sup> on the grid.

During the race it was almost impossible for the two cars to overtake on the narrow track, and they got stuck at the front of the middle field of 52 GT3 cars. Despite that, top-ten finishes would have been possible, but for an issue in the narrow pit lane during a pit stop that saw the #98 crew lose several positions; the BMW Junior Team also dropped several places in one of the many safety car periods after needing to wait an additional lap before pitting.



The evening before the race, as the representative of the ROWE Racing team, Verhagen celebrated a dominant victory in the opening race of the Fanatec Esports GT Pro Series. In the virtual BMW M4 GT3, he pulled away from his rivals early on in the sim race, which is a firm fixture of the race series, and his victory saw him bring home five points for the team standings.

### Quotes from the race at Imola:

**Andreas Roos (Head of BMW M Motorsport):** "The first appearance in the GT World Challenge Europe together with ROWE Racing showed the potential of our BMW M4 GT3. This was particularly clear in the race, with our lap times remaining competitive throughout. We had comparable lap times with the front-runners at the end but now we need to make use of our potential in qualifying so that we start further up the grid. You can see how close it is in this race series. We also had an issue with the #98 during a pit stop, which cost us a lot of time. To sum up, we would have loved to finish in the top ten, which would definitely have been possible. We have a very good basis, but we need to optimise it in quite a few areas if we want to finish on the podium next time."

**Augusto Farfus (#98 BMW M4 GT3):** "I think it was a positive start to my first season together with ROWE Racing. Thank you to the team and to BMW M Motorsport for this opportunity. It was clear before the race that there would be a learning process with a new car, new teammates and a new racing series. We didn't execute the race the way we wanted, but that's also part of the learning process. We could have done and achieved more in this race, that's why I'm not satisfied with our result, but the motivation for the next race at Le Castellet is even greater now."

**Neil Verhagen (#50 BMW M4 GT3):** "All in all I would say it was a good first race for us in the GT World Challenge Europe. We definitely have some things to improve and work on together with the team but it's a big learning curve for all of us. For us Juniors, the racing series is new, for the team the car is new, so it's normal that we have a lot of potential to get better. I am looking forward to the next races and I'm very happy to have won the first Esports GT Pro Series race. A big thank you goes to Nils Naujoks from BMW SIM Racing Team BS+COMPETITION who helped me a lot during the preparation for this event."

# BMW

## Corporate Communications



### Media Contact.

#### Andrea Schwab

Spokesperson BMW M

Phone: +49 (0) 151 601 60988

E-mail: [Andrea.Schwab@bmw.de](mailto:Andrea.Schwab@bmw.de)

#### Martin Schleypen

Spokesperson BMW M

Phone: +49 (0) 151 601 37889

E-mail: [Martin.Schleypen@bmwgroup.com](mailto:Martin.Schleypen@bmwgroup.com)

### Media Website.

<http://www.press.bmwgroup.com/global>

### BMW M Motorsport on the Web.

Website: [www.bmw-motorsport.com](http://www.bmw-motorsport.com)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/bmwmotorsport](https://www.facebook.com/bmwmotorsport)

Instagram: [www.instagram.com/bmwmotorsport](https://www.instagram.com/bmwmotorsport)

YouTube: [www.youtube.com/bmwmotorsport](https://www.youtube.com/bmwmotorsport)

Twitter: [www.twitter.com/bmwmotorsport](https://www.twitter.com/bmwmotorsport)

 **Motorsport**

